**LITTER CRACKDOWN FOR CLEAN RIVERS IN UVALDE COUNTY**

Uvalde County comes together to let people know that litter will not be tolerated. Law enforcement officers will be patrolling the rivers and on the lookout for litterbugs on June 26-28, 2020.

Texas Hill Country River Region, Uvalde County, Uvalde County Sheriff’s Department, Texas Game Wardens, and other local and state law enforcement officers are working together to let locals and visitors know that litter will not be tolerated on the crystal-clear rivers within Uvalde County. The Frio, Sabinal and Nueces rivers have provided a beautiful natural attraction for families to enjoy for generations, but as the number of visitors grow, so does the amount of litter.

The rivers in Uvalde County are seeing an unprecedented amount of trash being left behind.

Cleaning up after people who leave their trash in the rivers, while a necessary element to avoid being completely overrun with litter, does not address the cause of the problem. It’s imperative that river-goers understand there are consequences for littering, so that they might take personal responsibility to lessen the volume of trash on the rivers. “The rivers are an important and beloved part of our community in Uvalde County, and we want to ensure that they continue to be an asset to citizens and visitors, but we all need to do our part,” said County Judge Bill Mitchell.

In an effort to raise awareness and combat litter, law enforcement officers will be on high alert on the Frio, Nueces and Sabinal rivers and keeping an eye out for litterbugs. Officers will also be handing out yellow UP2U river trash bags, and reminding people that no glass or Styrofoam is allowed on the rivers. “Glass left behind on the river is not only unsightly litter and a danger to the environment, but it’s a danger to river-goers and often it’s small children who run into the river without shoes and can be seriously injured by broken glass in the water,” said EMT and Garner State Park concessionaire Brett Rimkus.

“Enjoy our rivers. Don’t trash them,” said Sheriff Mendeke. “Deputies will be out on the river in kayaks looking for littering and other possible criminal activity.” Uvalde County deputies cover a lot of ground during the peak tourist season in the Summer, and multiple agencies such as Texas Game Wardens, DPS, and even Uvalde Police Department within the city limits, all work tirelessly to keep people and places safe in the Hill Country River Region.

“The tourism industry in Uvalde County is one of the strongest economic drivers in the county, and we love to welcome people to enjoy these beautiful canyons, but when people litter, we all suffer. We are happy that families are able to get outside after being cooped up in quarantine for so long, but the amount of trash we’ve seen this year is simply unacceptable and unlike anything we’ve ever seen before. We can’t do it alone, and are hoping everyone will remember to take out what they bring in,” said Annabell McNew, Executive Director of Texas Hill Country River Region, Inc.

“A big part of our job is making sure these rivers stay clean and safe for future generations to enjoy, so the Texas Game Wardens will be on the lookout for litterbugs, and handing out UP2U bags to river-goers. We all have to do our part,” said Game Warden Rachel Kellner.

Tourists and locals are encouraged to leave the rivers cleaner than they found them by taking free yellow UP2U bags (available at most local businesses in Concan and HEB and Minit Mart C-Stores in Uvalde) with them to the rivers and taking their full trash bags with them when they leave. Yellow dumpsters are available to toss the yellow bags in for free at crossings in Concan or Uvalde County Visitor Center, and THCRR, inc. is working on adding dumpster locations around Uvalde for easier access for Nueces River-goers as a part of an ongoing river cleanup program.

Friendly reminder: “Don’t Trash Where You Splash!”

*Texas Hill Country River Region & Uvalde County Visitors Center serve to promote Uvalde County as a year-round vacation destination. The Frio, Sabinal and Nueces Rivers offer endless outdoor fun for the whole family. [VisitUvaldeCounty.com](http://www.visituvaldecounty.com/)*

*THCRR, Inc. manages a comprehensive River Cleanup Program, that involves waste management, distribution of 75,000 UP2U river trash bags to river-goers, free dump sites for river trash, a supplemental contract cleaning crew, a volunteer river cleanup program, and litter education and awareness.*

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